



Esteemed Members of the Appropriations Committee,

My name is Jane Bisantz, director of Jane Bisantz & Associates, LLC. Ours is an agency of early childhood specialists providing Birth to Three services to 150+ families in the Greater Hartford area. I am writing regarding the DDS budget, specifically the Birth to Three budget.

I want first to express my gratitude for the support that you have given to Birth to Three throughout the years. Birth to Three has shown itself to be one of Connecticut's best investments, significantly reducing state and local expenditures each year.* Thank you in advance for your support of the annualized nine million dollar increase targeted for past growth in the program. Your continued commitment to Connecticut's young children and their families is essential to their success and wellbeing.

This is clearly a time in which revenue must be maximized in all programs. Private insurance collection is an area where Birth to Three revenue could be increased without increasing the burden on our families. Currently, each of the many Birth to Three agencies individually bills private insurance for their services. Receipts are turned over to the state minus a 10% collection reimbursement. We Birth to Three agencies do our best, but few of us possess expertise in insurance claims collection. **Centralizing private insurance billing by outsourcing it to one specialized contractor would doubtlessly increase cooperation and collections from private insurance. It is very unlikely that requiring individual Birth to Three agencies to continue to be responsible for insurance collection while removing any compensation for their individual efforts would have that effect.** I therefore respectfully suggest the following:

- That you postpone changes to insurance billing procedures until the end of existing Birth to Three contracts (FY2011), and
- That you direct the Department to outsource and centralize insurance billing for Birth to Three utilizing an insurance billing contractor beginning in FY 2012.

Thank you for your attention to this issue and for your continuing attention to the needs of our children and families. Please contact me to discuss this at 860-267-6768.

*data source: State Department of Education, Bureau of Data Collection, Research and Evaluation; DDS, CT Birth to Three System